

FIREFIGHTER I SELECTION PROCESS

An informational guide
for candidates interested in the
2019 Firefighter I Recruitment



**City of
Santa Clara**
The Center of What's Possible



City of Santa Clara
Human Resources Department

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OVERVIEW

This guide is designed for individuals interested in pursuing a career as a Firefighter I with the Santa Clara Fire Department. The official Job Announcement for Firefighter I can be found online at www.santaclaraca.gov/jobs starting October 1, 2019.

Candidates are advised to carefully review this guide in addition to the official Firefighter I Job Announcement, paying particular attention to the minimum qualifications and the selection process timeline. Please submit an Employment Application, Supplemental Questionnaire, and California Emergency Medical Technician – I (EMT-I) certificate (or proof of class enrollment), only if you meet the minimum qualifications for this position.

Below is the tentative timeline for the 2019 Firefighter I selection process (additional details on the individual steps of the process are provided in this guide):

FIREFIGHTER SELECTION PROCESS	
COMPONENT	DATES
Job Advertised	Tuesday, October 1, 2019 - Thursday, October 31, 2019 or until 1200 applications are received.
Online Application Packets Due* <i>Application packets will not be accepted prior to Tuesday, October 1, 2019 (8 am) or after Thursday, October 31, 2019 (4 pm).</i>	Thursday, October 31, 2019 4:00 p.m.
Written Examination <i>Weighted Pass/Fail</i>	Sunday, December 15, 2019
Oral Examination #1 ** <i>Weighted Pass/Fail</i>	Week of January 27, 2020 (Tentative)
Oral Examination #2 ** <i>Weighted 100%</i>	Week of February 24, 2020 (Tentative)
Departmental Interviews Chief's Oral Interviews	TBD
Background investigation, psychological, medical examination, CPAT cert. verification, and drug screening	After conditional offer of employment extended
Firefighter I Academy	TBD (approx. 16 weeks)

* Only the first 1,200 applications will be accepted within the application filing period. Applications will only be accepted through Thursday, October 31, 2019 (4 pm) or until 1,200 applications are submitted, whichever comes first.

** The Oral #1 and #2 Examinations will be conducted between the hours of 8:00 am – 5:00 pm in Santa Clara. The number of days will depend on the number of candidates being invited to the examinations.

THE POSITION

Firefighting involves extremely difficult and dangerous physical work, often involving emergency and life-or-death situations. The physical and mental demands of the job are considerable and the selection process is challenging. The Santa Clara Fire Department is a paramilitary organization with a clearly defined chain of command that must be followed. All personnel must adhere to established standards regarding personal conduct and grooming. Adherence to discipline is a mandatory responsibility of each member of the Santa Clara Fire Department.

Once hired into the position, a Firefighter I will be assigned to an extensive Firefighter Academy to learn the basic skills necessary to perform the job. After graduating from the Academy, the typical work schedule for a Santa Clara Firefighter I consists of 24-hour shifts, averaging 56 hours per week. In the span of 24 calendar days, a Firefighter I will work eight 24-hour shifts.

Upon graduation from the Academy, each Firefighter I will be assigned to a company for a three-month interval. During this time, probationary Firefighter I's continue to receive training from the Department and are expected to study on their own. During Department drills, each Firefighter I is expected to pay attention, observe the techniques being demonstrated, participate actively, and ask questions. There are defined study and drill requirements that must be met; a formal evaluation will be conducted each month by the Company Officer. After the initial three-month period, the probationary Firefighter I will be assigned to another company for three-month intervals during the probationary period. The Training Division will also monitor the progress and skill level of each probationary Firefighter I with periodic testing that will take the form of written, manipulative, and oral examinations. It is expected that a probationary Firefighter I will successfully pass all of these examinations.

New Firefighter I's must successfully complete the two (2) year probationary period to be considered for permanent appointment to the position.

The complete job description, salary schedule, summary of benefits, and Memorandum of Understanding for this position can be found online at www.santaclaraca.gov.

Qualifications

To participate in the selection process, interested candidates must meet all of the following requirements at time of application:

- ☐ Graduation from high school or equivalent
- ☐ At least 21 years of age (Must be born on or before October 31, 1998)
- ☐ A valid California Class C driver's license at time of appointment
- ☐ A California Emergency Medical Technician – I (EMT-I) certificate or proof of class enrollment.

THE SELECTION PROCESS

Online Application Packets Accepted: Tuesday, October 1, 2019 (8 am) – Thursday, October 31, 2019

(4 pm) or until 1200 applications received (whatever comes first).

All individuals interested in applying for the position of Firefighter I should first review the qualifications. Candidates who meet these qualifications must submit a completed City of Santa Clara Employment Application, Firefighter I Supplemental Questionnaire, and California Emergency Medical Technician – I (EMT-I) certificate, or proof of enrollment in an EMT certification course, online at www.santaclaraca.gov/jobs. Applications should be submitted electronically through the City's website at www.santaclaraca.gov. Applications must be filled out completely; please do not substitute "see resume" in the employment history section of the application. Attachments and additional materials not stated in the job announcement (resumes, cover letters, or other documentation) submitted will not be reviewed. Candidates will be disqualified if they do not meet the minimum qualifications or if they submit a late or incomplete application packet.

All applications will be screened to ensure candidates meet the minimum qualifications.

Note: Only the first 1,200 applications will be accepted within the application filing period. Applications will only be accepted through Thursday, October 31, 2019 (4 pm) or until 1,200 applications are submitted, whichever comes first.

Preference Points:

To qualify for Preference Points, proof must be submitted by the application packet final filing date and time. For **Santa Clara Volunteer/Reserve Firefighter's Preference Points**, applicants must submit proof of eligibility, as specified in Section 2.20 of the City of Santa Clara Civil Service Rules and Regulations. For **Veteran's Preference Points**, applicants who have separated from military service (Active Duty Status) must submit proof of honorable discharge (Form DD214) as specified in Section 2.22 of the City of Santa Clara Civil Service Rules and Regulations. The Civil Service Rules and Regulations are available online at:

<http://santaclaraca.gov/Modules/ShowDocument.aspx?documentid=750>

Written Examination: Sunday, December 15, 2019

Application packets submitted by the filing deadline will be carefully reviewed to identify those candidates who meet the minimum qualifications for this position. All applications will be screened to ensure candidates meet the minimum qualifications.

Oral Examination #1

Depending on logistical considerations and the size of the applicant pool, it is possible that only those **candidates earning the highest passing scores on the written examination** will be invited to participate in the first oral examination, which is weighted pass/fail. The first oral examination is tentatively scheduled for the **week of January 27, 2020**. The oral examination #1 will be scheduled between 8:00 am – 5:00 pm.

Candidates who pass the written examination but do not earn an invitation to the first oral examination will remain eligible to participate in a future oral examination if deemed necessary by the City.

Oral Examination #2

Depending on logistical considerations and the size of the applicant pool, it is possible that only those **candidates earning the highest passing scores on oral examination #1** will be invited to participate in oral examination #2, which is weighted 100%. The second oral examination is tentatively scheduled for the **week of February 24, 2020**. The oral examination #2 will be scheduled between 8:00 am – 5:00 pm.

Candidates who pass oral examination #1 but do not earn an invitation to oral examination #2 will remain eligible to participate in a future oral examination if deemed necessary by the City.

Departmental Interviews

Only those **candidates who successfully pass all phases of the selection process will earn placement on the eligible list**, which may be used for current and future vacancies in the job classification during the life of the eligible list. Placement on the eligible list does not guarantee nor imply that a job offer will follow. Certification of eligible candidates will be made each time the Fire Department intends to fill a vacant position. Candidates in the top ten ranks will be certified for one vacant position, with an additional rank certified for each additional vacancy.

Candidates certified to the Fire Department will be contacted to schedule a departmental interview (Chief's oral interview). The Chief will make selections from this group of candidates. Candidates not immediately selected will remain on the eligible list until its expiration (typically one year) and may be contacted for future vacancies.

Final Steps

If given a conditional offer of employment, candidates will be required to pass a background investigation, psychological, medical examination, CPAT (certification verification within the six months prior to conditional offer), and drug screening prior to appointment.

Firefighter Academy

Candidates hired into the position of Firefighter I are tentatively scheduled to begin the Firefighter Academy. The Academy is expected to last approximately 16 weeks.

EXAMINATION PREPARATION

General

Before applying for any job, it is wise to research the position and the organization. In addition to reviewing this guide, candidates may find it useful to talk directly with Santa Clara Firefighters and visit the Santa Clara Fire Department Recruitment website at www.joinscfd.org

Written Examination

The entry-level Firefighter written examination is designed to assess the skills and aptitudes necessary to succeed as a Firefighter I. Specifically, the written examination is generally designed to measure the ability to understand and remember written and oral information, perform basic mathematics, and understand mechanical principles and diagrams. The examination will include approximately 100 multiple-choice questions, each with four possible answers. Candidates will be allowed up to two hours to complete the written examination. Calculators will be allowed.

Oral Examination #1 and #2

The first oral examination is a brief panel interview (up to 20 minutes) that is designed to assess the candidates' qualifications in areas such as communication skills, teamwork, interpersonal skills, customer service, ability to self-assess, motivation and personal characteristics.

The second oral examination is a more in-depth panel interview (up to 30 minutes). This examination may further evaluate the areas assessed in the first oral interview and it is also designed to assess candidates in competencies such as interpersonal skills, oral communication, and analytical skills.

It is to your advantage to listen carefully to the questions asked and completely and directly answer each question. You should be completely honest and provide a clear and concise summary of your qualifications. As with any interview, you should speak clearly and use proper grammar. Since each examination will have a time limit, it will be your responsibility to manage your time effectively.

Candidate Physical Ability Test (CPAT)

The Santa Clara Fire Department uses the California Firefighter Joint Apprenticeship Committee (CFFJAC) Candidate Physical Ability Test (CPAT) as our performance examination. A valid CPAT card issued within 6 months prior to the date of conditional offer is required.

For more information regarding the CPAT, visit <http://www.cffjac.org/go/jac/cpat/>.

THE DEPARTMENT

The mission of the Santa Clara Fire Department is to protect and enhance the quality of life of the people we serve. The Fire Department provides caring, customer-oriented service to protect life, property and the environment through education, prevention, emergency preparedness, and emergency response.

The Santa Clara Fire Department currently consists of approximately 167 employees (including 50 in the classification of Firefighter) and has a budget of approximately \$42.6 million. Ten fire stations serve the City of Santa Clara's 18.41 square miles, including eight Engine Companies, two Truck Companies, one Heavy Rescue Company, three Ambulances, and one Hazardous Materials Unit. Engine companies are assigned one Firefighter, one Driver/Engineer, and one Captain. Truck companies are assigned two Firefighters, one Driver/Engineer, and one Captain. The Hazardous Material unit and Heavy Rescue Company each have one Driver/Engineer assigned. Ambulances are assigned two Paramedics, who may be any rank. There is one suppression Battalion Chief and one Assistant Training Officer on duty per shift. Rural/Metro Corporation is the contracted ambulance service for Santa Clara County. Each station has a radius of approximately one and a half miles, which helps Santa Clara maintain an outstanding response time.

In 2016, the Santa Clara Fire Department answered 9,396 calls for service. Medical/rescue incidents were the most common, comprising 70% of the calls. The Department also responded to other emergency and non-emergency calls 30% of the time.

For more information on the Santa Clara Fire Department, please visit our website at <http://fire.santaclaraca.gov>.

THE COMMUNITY

The City of Santa Clara is a family oriented and business friendly city in the center of Silicon Valley, located in Santa Clara County at the southern tip of San Francisco Bay, about 45 miles south of San Francisco. The City of Santa Clara is in a strategic regional location convenient to freeways, airports, railroads, expressways, light rail and other public transportation. "The Mission City," as Santa Clara is known, was founded in 1852 and has grown to a community of more than 123,752 residents and an employment base of approximately 65,800. With 18.41 square miles of tree-lined neighborhoods, thriving commercial and industrial centers, and 300 days of sunshine each year, it is an ideal location for individuals, families, and businesses.

Explore California's early Spanish history at Mission Santa Clara de Asis, founded in 1777, on the beautiful campus of Santa Clara University, the State's oldest institution of higher learning. Other points of interest and attractions include Mission College, the 100-acre California's Great America theme park, an award-winning Santa Clara Convention Center, Triton Museum of Art, the de Saisset Museum, Intel Museum, Levi's Stadium, the headquarters and practice fields of the San Francisco 49ers football team, and numerous shopping opportunities including Westfield Valley Fair.

Voted one of ten All-America Cities in the New Millennium by the National Civic League, Santa Clara has a "High Tech, Human Touch, H2"™ approach to serving the community's needs. Santa Clara Santa Clara has a long tradition of quality public services and a well-maintained infrastructure. The City has owned and operated its own electric, water and sewer utilities for over a century. Lower utility rates and high standards of service have encouraged the relocation and growth of businesses in our community.

Santa Clara is a full-service Charter City with a Council/Manager form of government and an annual budget of approximately \$753.6 million. The City's financial stability ensures the highest levels of citizen and business service, low business taxes and solid real estate value, and it is also one of the safest U.S. cities with a population of 75,000+. Our outstanding public safety record includes the highest fire rating in Santa Clara County and some of the fastest emergency response times in the state.

With a focus on high quality customer services and its reputation, it is no wonder more than 9,400 companies, including many of the world's top technology firms, and thousands of long-time residents have made the City of Santa Clara their home.

Personal Appearance Standards

Review Personal Appearance Standards policy before applying: Please [click here](#)